

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 7, 8, 12, 13 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasa et al in view of Kobayashi. Claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwasa in view of Kobayashi and further in view of Best.

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Cuevas and Examiner Mullins for the consideration given applicant's attorney at the interview of August 13, 2003. At the interview, agreement was reached to patentably distinguish, in independent claim 17, the present invention over the art of record, subject to an updated search.

Amendment was made to the penultimate paragraph of claim 17, to correct an inconsistency in the claim. The phrase "electrically insulating connecting piece" had antecedent basis in the claim and the penultimate paragraph was corrected to rely on this antecedent basis.

Also, in paragraph 2 of the office action, the objection to the drawings was avoided by the Amendment of December 20, 2002. Therefore, this objection should be withdrawn.

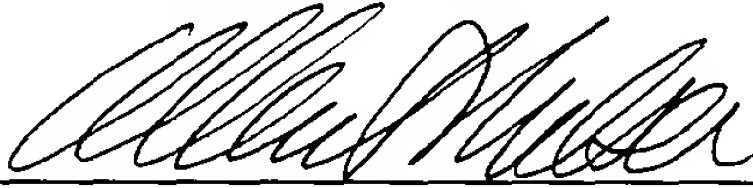
Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for

allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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